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MINNESOTA PELT PRODUCTION DOWN 9 PERCENT FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

PELT PRODUCTION: Minnesota, one of the nation's leading mink producing states, placed fourth in 2003 pelt production behind Wisconsin, Utah, and Oregon, according to the Minnesota Agricultural Statistics Service. Total state production for 2003 amounted to 245,200 mink pelts, down 9 percent from 270,600 in 2002. By color class, Mahogany accounted for 34.3 percent of the total 2003 production; Demi/Wild, 20.2 percent; Blue Iris, 19.9 percent; Black, 15.4 percent; and White, 6.6 percent. The remaining color classes accounted for 3.6 percent.

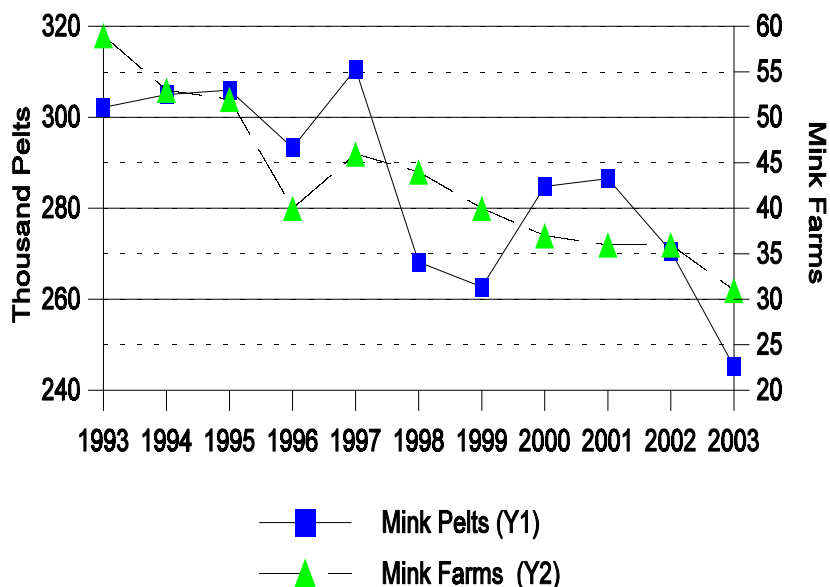
Total United States production for 2003 was 2.55 million pelts, down 2 percent from 2.61 million in 2002. Wisconsin, the leading mink producing state, produced 706,300 pelts in 2003, 27.7 percent of the nation's total. Utah, the second ranked mink producing state, produced a 23.1 percent share with 590,000 pelts. Oregon came in third with a production of 273,000 pelts in 2003.

By color class, the number of pelts as a percent of the total U.S. production for 2003 was: Black, 40.2 percent; Mahogany, 21.5 percent; Blue Iris, 16.1 percent; Demi/Wild, 6.4 percent; Sapphire, 5.8 percent; and White, 4.6 percent. The remaining color classes accounted for 5.4 percent. The total U.S. mink pelts produced during the 2003 crop year were valued at \$102.2 million, up 28 percent from \$79.8 million a year ago. The average price per pelt for the 2003 crop year was \$40.10, up from \$30.60 in 2002.

BRED FEMALES: Minnesota was fourth in the nation in the total number of females bred to produce kits in 2004, behind Wisconsin, Utah, and Oregon. Minnesota females bred for 2004 at 51,300 were down 8 percent from 2003. Of these females, Mahogany color class claimed 35.9 percent; Demi/Wild, 20.7 percent; Black, 18.5 percent; Blue Iris, 14.4 percent; and White, 6.0 percent. The remaining color classes accounted for 4.5 percent.

The number of mink females in the U.S. bred to produce kits in 2004 totaled 604,800, up less than half of 1 percent from the previous year. Females bred in the leading states and the changes from the previous year are: Wisconsin - 168,900, down 1 percent; Utah - 143,000, up 6 percent; Oregon - 53,300, down 6 percent; and Minnesota - 51,300, down 8 percent.

**Minnesota Mink Pelts
and Number of Farms 1993- 2003**



FARM NUMBERS: In the U.S., there were 307 mink farms producing pelts in 2003. The leading states were Utah with 80 farms, Wisconsin with 69 farms, Minnesota with 31 farms, and Oregon with 25 farms.